

## Executive Summary

The University of Arizona has made extraordinary advances over the past decade. It has extended its educational excellence to an ever-widening pool of undergraduate and graduate students while maintaining its outstanding reputation for cutting-edge research and increasing its engagement with, and service to, constituents across the state, throughout the country and around the world.

Since its last accreditation by the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission in 2000, the UA has given the world reason to ponder the possibility of life on Mars; it has expanded its nationally recognized colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy and Public Health into the state capitol of Phoenix; and it has continued to rank among the very best universities in the country for studies in the humanities, arts and letters.

The UA, one of 63 members of the prestigious American Association of Universities, was recently ranked 17th among all public universities by the highly respected Center for Measuring University Performance.

The university has accomplished all this while facing undoubtedly the most serious financial challenges in its history. It has responded to those challenges with vision and vigor, setting in motion plans for continuing to thrive on reduced state funding, with goals that are both ambitious and realistic.

The university embraces President Robert N. Shelton's vision of "Building a better Arizona through access, quality, and discovery"—a vision readers will recognize throughout this self study. (President Shelton's complete mission statement is at <http://www.president.arizona.edu/about>).

The University of Arizona, which is celebrating its 125th year in 2010, has been continuously accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1917, most recently in 2000.

This document demonstrates how the UA satisfies the Higher Learning Commission's five accreditation criteria while acknowledging the challenges ahead. The report also identifies changes the university is making to better serve its students and other constituents.

### **Criterion One: Mission and Integrity**

**The Organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.**

As a land-grant university, the University of Arizona has an unwavering commitment to serving the people and economy of Arizona. One of the primary areas of emphasis over the past 10 years has been to increase university access to students of all economic and ethnic backgrounds.

The Arizona Assurance Scholars program, started in 2008, is designed to improve access and success for in-state students from low-income backgrounds. It is based on the premise that all Arizona students should be able to pursue the best educational opportunities the state has to offer. Arizona Assurance offers its scholars financial assistance and more, including mentoring, classes designed to improve their chance for academic success, and career guidance and preparation. In the first year alone, the UA improved the retention rates of 590 students from families who earn up to \$42,400 a year compared with students from similar backgrounds the previous year.

The Arizona Telemedicine program extends access to top-quality medical services throughout the state, with an emphasis on medically underserved rural communities, Indian reservations and prisons. In 2009, the program received a \$1.13 million federal grant to create the Southwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center to support the development of electronic health records and to expand telemedicine services.

Addressing the diversity of students, faculty and staff has been a focal point for the past decade, and measurable progress has been made in increasing the success of minority students. The UA is a national leader in graduate education for Native American and Hispanic students, as well as students of varying abilities. At the same time, the UA recognizes the need to improve the success rates of Native American students.

In 2006, the university received a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Award for Institutional Transformation, which is leading to increased faculty diversity and equitable advancement opportunities for women.

Over the last 10 years, the UA has implemented a number of proactive approaches to improving institutional integrity. The focus has been on education and awareness of responsible conduct in all aspects of university life, from the classroom to the research lab, and on a renewed commitment to respectful behavior in the workplace.

In bridging to the future, the UA is placing particular focus on improving its numbers of successful students, faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds, and on extending shared governance and communication across the university.

## **Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future**

**The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.**

The University of Arizona's 2011-2015 Strategic Plan is based on four overarching goals: expanding access and enhancing educational excellence; increasing achievements in research, scholarship and creative expression; expanding community engagement and workforce impact; and improving productivity and increasing efficiencies.

The UA faces unprecedented challenges that will test its ability to manage demographic, economic and environmental pressures while continuing to fulfill its mission. The university's responses to these challenges include: increasing tuition and fees and implementing other strategic measures to offset cuts in state funding; broadening communication about the UA's goals and achievements; transitioning to responsibility-centered management; expanding distributed learning opportunities; and developing new strategies to increase faculty retention.

To improve its institutional effectiveness, the UA is upgrading and enhancing two major information technology support systems. The MOSAIC project is upgrading computer systems campus-wide, and Business Intelligence is an improved system for accessing data on students, finances, research and personnel.

The UA recently improved its planning and budgeting processes to address key areas of the university's mission in a proactive manner. Bridging to the future requires a new approach to campus-wide planning and budgeting, with closer alignment of those processes across the university.

### **Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching**

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

The UA's commitment to access, quality and discovery is clearly exemplified by the experiences of its students in the classroom and beyond. Access has increased for Arizona residents, even with tuition increases. The quality of the educational experience has improved, along with a focus on undergraduate research experiences. Services that recruit and prepare students for study at the UA have increased. Student learning and effective teaching at the UA is the essential focus of the campus community. The student educational experience in the past 10 years has involved a conscious integration of classroom and beyond-the-classroom experiences.

As a result of the UA's focus on the student experience, undergraduates are now retained at slightly higher rates and graduate more quickly than in the past. UA persistence rates for minority students as a group are nearly identical to those of the total undergraduate population, although there are variations between different populations of minority students. In addition, minority graduation rates, while still lagging behind the overall graduation rates, have seen significant increases. UA assessment of student learning outcomes and programs is very strong for degree programs and units with professional accreditation, and significant strides have been made for the rest of the university in the last five years.

Graduate education has achieved improvement of time-to-degree in many departments, a strong focus on interdisciplinarity and translational research, and improved and proactive processes for addressing graduate student concerns.

Bridging to the future requires continued focus on improving retention and graduation rates of all students, while providing greater access to classes and assessing student outcomes effectively. The growth in student numbers will be partly addressed through new means of enrollment management, including a new focus on distributed learning.

### **Criterion Four: Creativity and Knowledge Discovery**

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

The UA is one of the nation's leading research universities, known for its strong support of interdisciplinarity and shared scholarship. Many of the UA's efforts in the areas of research, creativity and knowledge discovery cross college boundaries, helped by a support system that facilitates interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to research and education. These qualities are critical to the university's ability to help solve significant issues facing our society.

The UA is proud to be a student-centered research university, with students and faculty routinely working together on such lofty pursuits as new ways to diagnose and prevent disease, to sustain natural resources, to assess the impact of stereotyping on self-esteem and success, to search for conditions that might support life beyond our own planet, and to reason critically and objectively about moral and human values. The university's national and international prominence in research is due partly to the collaborative investigations by students and faculty working together.

In the last 10 years, the UA has ranked as high as 14th among the nation's public universities in National Science Foundation research expenditures. In the most recent NSF rankings, the UA is first in the nation in funding for research in the physical sciences.

The UA excels in providing students and the greater community with a wide range of resources and programs aimed at acquiring knowledge and promoting discovery. The university has great depth in interdisciplinary course work and quality research, as well as outreach centers that cover areas as diverse as water resources and second-language acquisition. The UA demonstrates this through programs on- and off-campus, including extensive study-abroad opportunities. UA programs engage undergraduates, graduate students, and the general public.

As it bridges to the future, the UA is focusing on expanding interdisciplinary opportunities for students, creating more resources for research opportunities, and expanding translational research, broadly defined.

### **Criterion Five: Engagement and Service**

*As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.*

The University of Arizona has a strong record of engagement and service to the people of Arizona, the nation as a whole and areas around the world. The UA views engagement as active, reciprocal, and sustainable partnerships with constituencies within and beyond the campus community, rather than the more conventional understanding of outreach and service that casts the institution of higher learning in the dominant role. The UA's emphasis on translational research and an emerging emphasis on service learning improve the impact of its engagement and service.

Many long-lasting relationships testify to the strength of past engagement efforts. The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has a strong record of effective and enduring engagement that includes and goes beyond its Cooperative Extension program. The Colleges of Education and Public Health, among others, have also been actively developing new opportunities for engagement locally and abroad. The Arizona Outreach College was created, in particular, to facilitate the development of new and innovative ways of engaging our public.

In order to bridge to a future of continued successful engagement with its constituencies, the UA needs to increase its communication and promotion of engagement activities on campus and beyond; create a President's Advisory Council for Engagement and Outreach; develop policies to reward the engagement efforts of faculty, students and other members of the university community; and make engagement as essential to the student experience as teaching and research.

### **Conclusion**

The last 10 years have witnessed many improvements in UA engagement. A series of administrative reorganizations have led to stronger support for the university's interactions with its constituencies.

As it bridges to the future, the UA continues to respond to reductions in state funding while striving for improvement in four critical areas:

- **Alignment of planning and budgeting** across all levels of the university
- **Expanded evaluation and assessment** through improved data collection
- **Continued engagement and service** in Arizona and beyond
- **Increased diversity** of students, faculty and staff

Each of these four areas has seen tremendous improvement over the past 10 years. Additional work is required to bridge to a future in which all students thrive, graduate and become productive members of our society. The University of Arizona embraces these challenges and welcomes the opportunity to continue its commitment to quality, access and discovery in the coming decade.

## NCA 2010

### The University of Arizona Executive Team

Beth Mitchneck <i>Co-Chair</i>	Professor, School of Geography and Development and Associate Dean, Colleges of Letters, Arts and Science
Randall M. Richardson <i>Co-Chair</i>	Professor, Department of Geosciences
Edward G. Frisch	Associate Vice President, Academic Resources, Planning and Management
Richard J. Kroc	Associate Vice Provost, Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Mary L. Raphael	Coordinator, Academic Planning
Susan Robison	Program Coordinator Senior
Guillermo Uribe	Assistant Director, Retention and Program Evaluation

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### The University of Arizona Steering Committee

Beth Mitchneck <i>Co-Chair</i>	Professor, School of Geography and Development Associate Dean, Colleges of Letters, Arts and Science
Randall M. Richardson <i>Co-Chair</i>	Professor, Department of Geosciences
Paul Allvin	Associate Vice President for Communications, External Relations (left UA)
Michael Bruck	Assistant Director, Research Computing
Gail Burd	Vice Provost, Academic Affairs
Cori Cashen	Assistant Registrar, Office of the Registrar
Ferlin Clark	President, Diné College
Richard Eribes	Dean Emeritus, Architecture and Landscape Architecture former Assistant Vice President, Planning and Development
Celestino Fernández	University Distinguished Faculty Outreach Professor, Department of Sociology
Karen Francis-Begay	Special Advisor to the President, Native American Affairs, Office of the President
Juan Garcia	Professor, Department of History former Vice President for Instruction and Dean of University College
Wyllstyn Hill	Vice President, Information Technology, Raytheon Missile Systems
Wanda Howell	Chair of the Faculty Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences
Ashley Hyne	Student, Assistant to the ASUA President
James Johnson	Graduate Student, Optical Sciences
Miranda Joseph	Associate Professor, Gender and Women's Studies former Chair, Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee
Steven Lynn	Vice President, Communications and Government Relations, Tucson Electric and Power Company
Stephen MacCarthy	Vice President, External Relations
Ronald Marx	Dean, College of Education
Bob McLendon	Regent, Arizona Board of Regents
Suzanne Miles	Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, Pima Community College

## The University of Arizona Steering Committee *(continued)*

Elizabeth Miller	former Chair, Hispanic Advisory Council, Tucson
Richard Miranda	Deputy City Manager, City of Tucson
Jacqueline Mok	Vice President and Chief of Staff, Office of the President
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Michael Proctor	Vice Provost, Outreach and Global Initiatives
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Robert R. Smith	Acting Senior Vice President, Business Affairs Associate Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Leslie Tolbert	Vice President, Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development Regents' Professor, Department of Neuroscience
Theodore Tong	Associate Dean, College of Pharmacy
Melissa Vito	Vice President, Student Affairs

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### The University of Arizona Working Teams

#### *Mission and Integrity Working Team—Team Chairs/Co-Chairs*

Cindy Rankin (Chair)	Lecturer, Department of Physiology Research Integrity Officer, Vice President for Research Office
Marie Chisholm-Burns	Department Head, Department of Pharmacy, Practice and Science
Jennifer Jenkins	Associate Professor, School of Media Arts
Norma Mendoza-Denton	Associate Professor, School of Anthropology

#### *Team Members*

Charles Mackin	Undergraduate Student, Department of Electrical Engineering
Margy McGonagill	Community representative, Neuro and Alzheimer's Interests
Robert Mitchell	Interim Associate Dean, University Library
Jeffrey Milem	Associate Dean, College of Education
Veronica Peralta	Business Manager, Department of Mexican American and Raza Studies
Carla Stoffle	Dean, University Libraries & Center for Creative Photography
Frank Zizza	Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics, UA South (left UA)

#### *Preparing for the Future Working Team—Team Chairs/Co-Chairs*

Soyeon Shim (Chair)	Professor and Director, Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences
Jerzy Rozenblit	Raymond J. Oglethorpe Endowed Professor and Department Head, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering University Distinguished Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor of Surgery, College of Medicine

#### *Team Members*

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Walter Doyle	Professor, Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies
Richard Eribes	Dean Emeritus, Architecture and Landscape Architecture former Assistant Vice President, Planning and Development

## University of Arizona Working Teams *(continued)*

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Lisa Lovallo	Community Representative, Vice President and System Manager, Cox Communications
Fernando Martinez	Director, BIO5 Institute Regents' Professor, Department of Pediatrics
Jeffrey Ratje	Associate Fiscal Analyst, Budget Office
Edward Reid	Professor, School of Music
Peter Reiners	Professor, Department of Geosciences
Kevin Washburn	Rosenstiel Distinguished Professor of Law and University Distinguished Professor, College of Law (left UA)

### ***Student Learning and Effective Teaching Working Team—Team Chairs/Co-Chairs***

William McCallum (Chair)	University Distinguished Professor and Department Head, Department of Mathematics
Lynette Cook-Francis	Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs
Jeanne Pemberton	Regents' Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

#### ***Team Members***

Carol Bender	Program Director, Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
Laura Berry	Associate Dean, The Honors College
Paul Blowers	Associate Professor, Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering
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Roxie Catts	Director, Advising Resource Center, Office of Academic Affairs
Carina Groves	Undergraduate, Colleges of Letters, Arts and Science
Dianne Horgan	Associate Dean, Graduate College
Gwendolyn Johnson	Coordinator, Program Assessment, Office of Instruction and Assessment
Kevin Moynahan	Deputy Dean, Education, College of Medicine
Michael Proctor	Vice Provost, Outreach and Global Initiatives
Angelica Villarruel	Community representative, UA Parents and Family Association

### ***Creativity and Knowledge Discovery—Team Chairs/Co-Chairs***

Lisa Ordóñez (Chair)	Professor and Levine Family Faculty Fellow, Department of Management and Organizations
Neal Armstrong	Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Raina Maier	Professor, Department of Soil, Water and Environmental Science
Ellen McMahon	Associate Professor, School of Art

#### ***Team Members***

Francisco A. R. Garcia	University Distinguished Faculty Outreach Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
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## University of Arizona Working Teams *(continued)*

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Marcia Rieke	Regents' Professor, Department of Astronomy and Steward Observatory
Karen Seat	Associate Professor, Department of Classics
David Sommitz	Undergraduate, College of Optical Sciences, and Department of Electrical Engineering

### ***Engagement and Service Working Team—Team Chairs/Co-Chairs***

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Kevin Gosner	Department Head, Department of History

### ***Team Members***

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Bruce Johnson	Department Head, Department of Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies
Ana Maria Lopez	Professor, Department of Medicine Associate Dean, Outreach and Multicultural Affairs
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Nina Ossanna	Senior Licensing Associate, Office of Technology Transfer
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Douglas Taren	Associate Dean, Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health
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